

**EXHIBIT D-3**  
**PUBLIC ACCESS EASEMENT**  
**Ragged Point/ Pico Cove**  
**Recommended Access Plan**  
**October 7, 2003**  
*(updated July 8, 2004)*

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**Document Outline**

**A. Draft Recommendations for Public Access Plan**

The following Plan addresses four overarching categories related to public access at Ragged Point and Pico Cove:

1. **Ragged Point and Pico Cove Management**  
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Recommendation 1-2: Include Ragged Point and Pico Cove in Management Plan
2. **Supervised/Controlled Access**  
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Recommendation 2-3: Additional Docent Controls  
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4. **The Visitor Experience**  
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Recommendation 4-2: Visitor Education and Interpretive Program  
Recommendation 4-3: Trail Amenities and Improvements  
Recommendation 4-4: Comfort Stations

**B. Descriptions of Recommended Trail Segments**

**Ragged Point**

Site Access: Turn-out / Drop-offs  
Trail 1: North Trailhead to Bluff  
    Alternative Trail: South Bluff Trail  
Trail 2: South Trailhead to Beach  
Trail 3: Beach Trail  
Trail 4: Coast Ranch Trail  
    Alternative Trail: Return to Coastal Trail

**Pico Cove**

Site Access: Turn-out / Drop-off  
Trail 1: Pico Cove North Bluff Trail  
Trail 2: Pico Cove South Loop Trail

Attachments:

Recommended Access Plan Ragged Point Schematic (Exhibit D-3-B)

Recommended Access Plan Pico Cove Schematic (Exhibit D-3-A)

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## **A. Draft Recommendations for Public Access Plan**

Ragged Point and Pico Cove are open space areas that offer diverse hiking and viewing experiences in undeveloped seaside settings with panoramic views. In recognition of the continued ownership and operations of these properties, access areas will be open to the public on a limited basis via small, guided groups as provided under the terms of the Conservation Easement.

Note: Refer to the Schematic Public Access Plan for photo references and trail facilities.

### **1. Ragged Point and Pico Cove Management**

Unlike San Simeon Point, these agricultural and open space lands will not be open to daily visitor access, but will be open for docent-led tours every other month or as scheduled by the easement holder and property owner. Given that Ragged Point and Pico Cove will not assume the level of regular public access as San Simeon Point, the level of management activity will be less. Even so, both sites will have occasional visitor tours that will need to be organized and led and will need some regular maintenance such as vegetation control around the trails and fence repair.

#### **Recommendation 1-1: Consolidate Management of Easement Areas**

One management organization should be considered for public access management for the three easement areas: San Simeon Point, Ragged Point, and Pico Cove. This organization would be a single point of contact for the three sites and would administer similar tasks such as docent and volunteer coordination, vegetation management, trail maintenance, coordination of grazing activities with property owner, etc. (Refer to Recommendation 1-1, San Simeon Point Draft Recommendations for Public Access Plan)

#### **Recommendation 1-2: Include Ragged Point and Pico Cove in Management Plan**

The Draft Recommendations for Ragged Point and Pico Cove should augment the Draft Recommendations for San Simeon Point Public Access Plan. Categories of topics herein parallel that Plan and many Recommendations dovetail with San Simeon Point's. The final Recommendations should be considered for consolidation into a single plan to cover all three public access easement areas.

### **2. Supervised / Controlled Access**

Public access at Ragged Point and Pico Cove will be allowed through defined areas under a Conservation Easement that requires docent supervision and guidance. Both sites will have two types of trails on the properties: the multi-use Coastal Trail adjacent to Highway One and outside the property fence that is available year-round for general public use and docent trails within the property fence that will be open periodically on pre-scheduled dates. Access recommendations focus on the docent-led trails. In some areas, the Coastal multi-use trail provides connection between docent areas.

#### **Recommendation 2-1: Parking / Trailhead Coordination**

Providing public access to Ragged Point and Pico Cove requires different logistical planning than San Simeon Point. These sites are isolated from major visitor areas and none of the proposed roadside trailheads are situated where they can safely accommodate visitor parking. This Draft Recommendation proposes that a shuttle service be implemented to transport visitors to trailheads from a nearby location where parking is available and convenient. The Visitor Center at San Simeon Point (at the Warehouse) would be a good location because it is central to the two

sites and would be a logical meeting area. At the trailheads where sufficient space for turn-outs / shuttle drop-offs is not already available roadside, off-road drop-off areas that may accommodate one or two 15 passenger vans should be created behind the property fence (and served by a locked gate).

### **Recommendation 2-2: Periodic Access / Visitor Density**

Trails at Ragged Point and Pico Cove will not be open to the public most times of the year but will be allowed only via pre-scheduled docent-guided tours. Tours should be offered quarterly on Sundays by advance registration, and occasionally for special programs such as school field trips and scientific research programs. Visitor density should be limited to a maximum of 20 per scheduled day. Group sizes should be determined in consideration of the distance to be covered, the terrain, and potential safety concerns and should be no larger than 20 people per docent. If more than one group is planned for a single day, group entry should be staggered so that the sense of seclusion is maintained. Children should remain with parents at all times to avoid potential safety issues and those under age 18 should be accompanied by an adult guardian. Since the pastures at the Ragged Point easement area will continue to be used for agricultural operations (grazing), public visits should be scheduled to avoid potential compatibility problems with cattle or other agriculture concerns.

### **Recommendation 2-3: Additional Docent Controls**

It may be useful to have two docents per group. The second docent could "sweep" behind groups for stragglers and/or provide escort back to the trailhead should it be necessary (in case of emergency, need to use sanitary facilities (attached to the van), etc.). This measure would help to ensure that visitors are attended throughout the hike and that contingencies are accommodated safely and conveniently.

### **Recommendation 2-4: Deter Unauthorized Access**

Given the fact that Ragged Point and Pico Cove will not have regular tours and that some members of the public are likely to continue to enter the properties unauthorized, the properties should be monitored / patrolled to deter and control trespassing. A monitoring program should be developed as part of the overall Management Plan and may involve coordination with the local Sheriff or Highway Patrol for enforcement. Docent / volunteer patrols could also use site visits to monitor the need for fence repairs (due to cattle and trespassers) and vegetation overgrowth at the trails.



**Cut barbed wire at  
South Trailhead.**

**Photo 1**

### **Recommendation 2-5: Define Allowable Public Uses**

As recommended in this Draft Public Access Plan, public access will be controlled by regulating the days, times, means, and areas available. Allowable public uses should be clearly defined by docents prior to the walks. Public uses should be limited to passive recreation including walking/hiking, landscape painting, photography, and sightseeing. The following uses should not be allowed by the public: bicycling, picnicking, motor vehicles of any kind, camping, horseback riding, dogs/pets (other than Seeing Eye, service, or signal dogs), games (Frisbee, kite flying, etc.), alcohol consumption, fires, and smoking. No physical improvements other than those provided in the Conservation Easement will be allowed. There should be a "pack it in, pack it out" waste disposal policy for trails and overlook/vista points. If provided, trash receptacles should be limited to the docent vans at the trailheads.

### 3. Public Safety

Although Ragged Point and Pico Cove will be open to the public on a limited basis with the accompaniment of docent guides, there remain certain tasks to ensure safe use of the property during open periods.

#### **Recommendation 3-1: Safety Information**

In order to keep the landscape uncluttered, safety signage is not proposed in the Ragged Point and Pico Cove easement areas, so before visitors arrive at either of these sites visitors should be advised of potential safety issues. For example, many trails are very close to bluff edges and visitors should be advised of the need to stay back from them. Other safety concerns could include the presence of poison oak, safety near Highway 1 traffic lanes, or other conditions as they may warrant.

#### **Recommendation 3-2: Bluff Trail Safety**

Both Ragged Point and Pico Cove are proposed to have trails alongside the bluffs. The more hazardous trails should be relocated away from the bluff to prevent related bluff erosion and falling. Simple post and rope fencing should be installed in these areas to keep people away from hazardous bluff edges. Guardrails may be required in some cases. Docents should also advise hikers of the potential dangers near bluffs.



**Bluff trail safety should be emphasized near edges.  
Photo 2**

#### **Recommendation 3-3: Separate Bulls from People**

Ragged Point will be used for grazing at the rangeland south of Arroyo Hondo. Public access trips should be scheduled to prevent use conflicts and potential incompatibilities with grazing operations. If grazing is expected to occur year-round (irrigated pasture), transparent fencing should be installed to separate cattle and hikers.

#### **Recommendation 3-4: Improve Trail to Beach at Ragged Point**

Currently, the trail from Ragged Point to the beach (Ragged Point Trail 4: Coastal Trail to Beach Trail) is very narrow and has Poison Oak encroaching. Before Ragged Point is opened to the public, vegetation should be thinned or trimmed to make this trail wider so that it is conveniently and safely accessible to the general public. Ongoing vegetation and trail management should be included in the Management Plan.



**Narrow trail to beach  
(Trail 4) with dense  
vegetation.  
Photo 3**

#### **4. Visitor Experience**

Even though all three Hearst properties that will have conservation easements with provisions for public access have exceptional scenic attributes, the outdoor experiences offered by Ragged Point and Pico Cove differ from each other and from those at San Simeon Point. These sites will also differ from San Simeon Point because— from start to finish—experiences at Ragged Point and Pico Cove will be structured: visitors will arrive and depart by shuttle and hikes will be entirely docent-led.

##### **Recommendation 4-1: Emphasize Unique Experiences of Different Tours**

Ragged Point and Pico Cove trails offer different visitor experiences that should be emphasized in tour literature and announcements. The intrinsic qualities of each site as well as topics covered in docent lectures (e.g., coastal habitats, cultural history, etc.) may be developed to offer distinctive tours for each site. For instance, the landscape at Ragged Point is more rugged and, due to its remoteness and the pine forest canopies, it evokes a sense of isolation or seclusion. Ragged Point also has a maze of winding paths that lead through the trees, which creates a nice covered loop path. The South Ragged Point area (generally around the Arroyo Hondo area) will offer the beach trail and coast ranch trail; hikes here may last up to a couple hours. While Pico Cove is not as remote as Ragged Point (being closer to the village of San Simeon Acres and Hearst Castle), the site is relatively natural and semi-secluded, with dense vegetation and little evidence of previous use or other people (single track trail). Pico Cove also offers the best marine wildlife viewing (Harbor seals, otters, etc.) opportunities.

Hiking distances and durations should also be emphasized features. Visitors could then select the tour that most closely matches their interests and abilities. Programs for both sites will need to examine any applicable Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

##### **Recommendation 4-2: Visitor Education and Interpretive Program**

Since all visitors will be accompanied by docent guides, the interpretive program should rely on verbal communication rather than signage. Information on facilities, refreshments, and the intensity and duration of hikes should be communicated at the reservation time and when the tour is advertised. The docent program may be tailored to particular sites, trail reaches, seasons, or other special interest. Docent tours should begin at the shuttle pick up location with instructions on trail etiquette, safety, available facilities, and refreshments. Interpretive information should continue en route to the site and throughout the course of the tour as relevant. Topics could include local culture, the marine environment, wildlife, natural habitats, etc. A docent education program should be developed to provide a consistent base



**Example of one of the many Ragged Point trails that meander the site.**

**Photo 4**



**Descending the bluff to the beach (Trail 4). Note the dense vegetation.**

**Photo 5**



**One of the many heavily shaded forest trails.**

**Photo 6**

level of knowledge among docents. Local academics, historians, or long-time residents may be good sources of information for such a program.

**Recommendation 4-3: Trail Amenities and Improvements**

Ragged Point and Pico Cove should remain close to their current state with limited improvements, other than those necessary to keep the trails open and safe. These areas are located in remote locations and much of the beauty of the area may be attributable to the noticeable absence of material improvements such as signs, benches, and buildings. There should be no trash cans at either Ragged Point or Pico Cove and a "pack it in, pack it out" policy adhered to. Permanent structures, other than those enumerated in the Conservation Easement, are not allowed. The only parking areas serving the sites should be off-road parking for shuttle vans located near trailheads that are secured behind the property fence with a gate. Parking areas should be non-paved. Signage should be limited to those directing people to the San Simeon Point Visitor Center (Warehouse) and Private Property/Passage with Permission.

**Recommendation 4-4: Comfort Stations**

Given that there will be no restrooms constructed at the properties, portable accommodations should be considered. For example, docent vans could pull a trailered porta-potty for sanitary purposes. Since the van would be parked at the trailhead, this convenience would be readily accessible both before and after trail hikes, and with docent escort (with a two-docent system in place), during excursions as well.



## B. Trail Descriptions

Note: Refer to the Schematic Public Access Plan for photo references and trail facilities. Descriptions follow north to south.

### ***Ragged Point***

The proposed public access areas on Ragged Point are large enough to accommodate more than one tour route. Many visitors may not be able to cover the distance offered by all the trails, which could take several hours if attempted. The absence of convenient sanitary facilities is another reason to offer alternative tours. This Draft Public Access Plan recommends offering docent tours of varying lengths and durations at Ragged Point. Shorter trail reaches could be combined with each other to form longer hikes or focus on smaller areas if shorter programs are desirable. The northern half of Ragged Point (from North Trailhead down to the South Trailhead near Arroyo Hondo) would provide experiences of pine forest, bluff trails, and views over San Carpoforo Beach, and sweeping views of the North Coast. The southern half would include the beach trail, open rangeland, and bluff trails with dramatic views of the rocky coves and shoreline. The South Trailhead could be used to facilitate hikes of varying lengths and durations going north or south. Tours would need to be coordinated with use of the grazing pastures (at Ragged Point proper and south of Arroyo Hondo).



**North Trailhead. A drop-off area is proposed for the area behind the fence.  
Photo 7**

### **Site Access: Turn-out / Drop-offs (\*)**

Docent-led groups will access the Ragged Point via a shuttle drop-off established North and South Trailheads at Highway 1. The drop-offs should be fenced and gated to prevent unauthorized parking and camping.



**Trail from North Trailhead to the pine forest.  
Photo 8**

### **Trail 1: North Trailhead to Bluff (Pink/Green trail)**

The North Trailhead should be located near the existing small turnout/proposed shuttle drop-off along Highway 1, about a quarter mile south of San Carpoforo Creek. Visitors would be dropped off behind the fenceline and begin their walk on the existing footpath. This trail is relatively easy to walk and meanders under and through the pine forest windrows and ending at a grassy bluff overlook. (Docents may want to take hikers through the maze of forest trails (Blue dashed trails) for an extended forest experience.) The bluff overlook (unimproved) would be a good place for docents to stop and allow visitors to rest and take in the impressive views to the north and south. Simple post and rope fencing should be installed here to keep people away from the hazardous bluff edges.



**Forest trail near south facing bluffs with dense poison oak.  
Photo 9**

### **Alternative Trail: South Bluff Trail (Red dashed trail)**

South of the bluff overlook is an area that may be considered for another trail segment leading to the bluffs; however, this area has extensive vegetation including poison oak and no existing path was found through it. If additional viewing areas are

desired, this trail could be cleared and a new trail created from Trail 1. The trail should follow the bluffs, taking care to remain ample distance from the bluff edge. A bluff overlook (unimproved) may be desired to capture southward views. The trail should reenter the forest at the first row of pines closest to the ocean. There is an existing forest trail that dead ends in this general area that can create a feasible trail connection to this trail.

### **Trail 2: South Trailhead to Beach (\*, Blue, / Green Trail)**

This route connects the proposed multi-use Coastal Trail at the South Trailhead to the beach. This trail could be a stand-alone route for those hikers who prefer a shorter hiking excursion. Trail 2 is a single track trail through dense vegetation. Hikers should be advised that, as the trail approaches the beach, it becomes steep in some places. Vegetation control for this area should be covered in the Management Plan. Prior to group hikes, vegetation should be trimmed as necessary to facilitate easier passage. The trail down to the beach is relatively easy for the average hiker and would require only minimum maintenance to maintain its usability.



**Trail 2 heading from South Trailhead to the beach.  
Photo 10**

### **Trail 3: Beach Trail (Yellow / Green Trail)**

This trail allows docent-led groups to walk in the sand along the length of the beach in either direction or both, depending on the group's time constraints and interest. The beach is fairly wide in most places and is easy to walk. Hikers may be interested in scrambling over the rocky outcropping at the southernmost end of the beach to a small pristine cove (depending on the tides). The return route back follows the same path (Trail 2) taken to the beach.



**End of Trail 2, meeting the Beach Trail (open sand).  
Photo 11**

### **Trail 4: Coast Ranch Trail**

Continuing south from the South Trailhead, Trail 4 follows the proposed multi-use Coastal Trail. The Coastal Trail parallels the property fence and in one place comes very close to Highway 1. Hikers will need to walk on the highway shoulder across Arroyo Hondo. On the other side of Arroyo Hondo, the Coastal Trail joins the Coast Ranch Trail, which heads toward the ocean and turns south at the bluff overlook. The route passes mostly through rangeland, is highly scenic, and is a relatively easy hike. Hikers could return to the shuttle pull-out back at the Beach Trail by heading back along the bluff the way they came or via an alternate route (Purple dashed trail) that could connect to the Coastal Trail (multi-use); hikers would exit through a locked gate and then head north.



### ***Pico Cove***

Pico Cove is a relatively small coastal bluff property compared to Ragged Point and San Simeon Point. Trails at Pico Cove offer scenic views of rocky bluffs that surround a small sheltered cove. Sea life such as otters, Harbor seals, and sea lions are often present. The entire Pico Cove site may be walked in a short amount of time.

#### **Site Access: Turn-out / Drop-off (✳)**

Docent-led groups will access the Pico Cove trailhead via a shuttle drop-off established either at the Pico Cove Trailhead at Highway 1. The drop off should be fenced and gated to prevent unauthorized parking and camping.

#### **Trail 1: Pico Cove North Bluff Trail (Pink / Green trail)**

This trail departs from the trailhead and heads north along the bluff to a rocky vista point. At the vista point, hikers can enjoy southward views of Pico Cove as well as views of the shoreline to the north. The return route follows the same trail back to the trailhead and South Loop Trail.

#### **Trail 2: Pico Cove South Loop Trail (Blue /Green trail)**

The loop trail departs at the Highway 1/Pico Cove Trailhead and follows the single-track footpath traveling south along the bluff with panoramic views of Pico Cove, north and south shorelines, and the open ocean. Opportunities for groups to take in views or to hear docent talks could occur all along the proposed trail, but would be particularly enjoyable at sites overlooking the ocean and cove. In many places, the trail is very close to the edge of bluff; docents should make sure to advise hikers of the risks of walking too close to the bluff. If necessary, rope and pole fencing should be installed to keep people away from particularly hazardous areas. The loop trail circles back toward the trailhead through dense coastal chaparral. Once back at the trailhead, hikers may choose to continue along the Pico Cove North Bluff Trail.



**Bluff trails at Pico Cove follow the length of the cove north and south.  
Photo 12**



**A view of the whole cove from the South Loop Trail.  
Photo 13**



**A narrow footpath through the Pico Cove public access area.  
Photo 14**